

**Town of Southold**  
**Generic Stewardship Management Plan**

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I. Executive Summary

The Plan herein guides the management and use of open space that is wholly or jointly-owned by the Town of Southold and purchased using the Community Preservation Fund and open space bonds as well as open space properties gifted or purchased by the Town that currently do not have infrastructure (excludes farmland; see Appendices A and B). More detailed management plans may be developed and approved by the Town Board for a particular parcel or assemblage of parcels, at which point the more detailed plan will supersede the guidance set forth in this document. The goal of the Generic Stewardship Management Plan is to balance public access with protecting the biological diversity and natural processes (*e.g.*, sediment transport, food web dynamics, stream flow, soil moisture regimes, flooding) in these landscapes.

The work needed on Town-owned open space requires tailored initiatives that are more appropriate for site-specific plans. As such, except for maintaining signage and cleaning up man-made garbage, the Town will proceed with a “hands-off” approach for parcels covered under this plan. With the exception of riparian access to the creeks and bays of Long Island Sound and the Peconic Estuary, the parcels managed under this plan are not considered to be officially open to the general public. Public access is allowed by way of special permit for environmental research, educational uses, and the clean-up of man-made trash. Overarching plans to manage deer (carried out by the Town of Southold Deer Management Committee) and early detection/rapid response (EDRR) invasive species (as per a Town EDRR response plan) may include all or select open space parcels also covered by this plan.

II. Introduction

The Generic Stewardship Management Plan herein guides the management and use of open space that is wholly or jointly-owned by the Town of Southold and purchased using the Community Preservation Fund and open space bonds as well as open space properties gifted or purchased by the Town that currently do not have infrastructure (excludes farmland; see Appendices A and B). All future open space parcels

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Adopted by Town Board June 21, 2011; Resolution 2011-457

purchased by or gifted to the Town will be immediately covered by this plan. More detailed management plans may be developed and approved by the Town Board for a particular parcel or assemblage of parcels, at which point the more detailed plan will supersede the guidance set forth in this document. Town-owned open space may constitute a portion of a larger assemblage of conservation areas, including non-profit, county, state, and federally-owned lands as well as privately-owned properties with easements. Some Town properties are held in joint ownership with other government partners. The goal of the plan herein is to balance public use with protecting the biological diversity and natural processes (*e.g.*, sediment transport, food web dynamics, stream flow, soil moisture regimes, flooding) in these landscapes.

### III. Public Access

With the exception of riparian access to the creeks and bays of Long Island Sound and the Peconic Estuary, the parcels managed under this plan are not considered to be officially open to the general public. Public access will be allowed by way of a special permit for the following activities:

(1) Environmental research and educational uses so long as these do not involve substantial alteration or improvement of the open space. Examples of environmental research and education uses include nature study, beach nesting bird species monitoring, and inventories of flora, fauna, trails, trash, archaeological features, and structures.

(2) Clean up of man made trash provided such clean up does not damage the property.

No other activities are allowed without the explicit approval of the Town Board.

The public access permit process depends on the number of people anticipated for the event. For groups less than 50, a special permit may be issued by the Land Preservation Department (see Appendix C for application). Applications to the Land Preservation Department shall be made at least 30 days prior to the proposed date of the event. For groups over 50 persons in attendance, a special permit may be issued by the Town Board of the Town of Southold, in accordance with the requirements set out in § 205, Public Entertainment and Special Events. All applications for a special events permit shall be made to the Town Board of the Town of Southold at least 60 days prior to the proposed date of the event and filed with the Town Clerk (fees and other requirements also apply – see § 205-1).

Public access may also be granted to manage deer and EDRR invasive species. Access for these efforts will be handled by the Town of Southold Deer Management Committee and through the Town's EDRR response plan, respectively.

### IV. General Management Approach

With two exceptions, the Town will proceed with a “hands-off” approach for parcels managed under this Generic Stewardship Management Plan. The Town will maintain signage including Town open space signs, posted/no hunting signs, safety signs, rules/regulations signs and Deer Management Program signs. In addition, the Town may clean-up man made trash provided such clean up does not damage the property. Installing any additional infrastructure or conducting any additional work will require Town Board approval based on recommendations of the Town of Southold Land Preservation Committee.

Scientific evidence shows that climate change and other stressors in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will most likely result in new vegetation successions, water regimes, wildlife habitat and survival conditions, surface-ice conditions, coastal erosion and sea-level change, and human responses. As such, management actions need to be ranked in terms of importance or priority. It seems outside the jurisdiction of the Town of Southold to deal with reducing the stressors related to climate change. It seems within the Town's purview to restore the functioning of a parcel that was lost because of select land-use activities and manage select invasive species that are directly jeopardizing a known population of endangered,

threatened, species of special concern, locally rare or unique native species or ecological community. These projects (*e.g.*, removing a house, pulling a bulkhead, providing migratory corridors for amphibians, removing large amounts of illegal dumping, restoring grasslands, threatened and endangered species management) require site-specific detailed plans, which is appropriate for management plans developed for a specific parcel or assemblage of parcels. Overarching plans to manage deer (carried out by the Town of Southold Deer Management Committee) and early detection/rapid response (EDRR) invasive species (as per the Town's EDRR response plan) may include all or select open space parcels also covered by this plan.

## V. Environmental Stressors

The majority of open space parcels were acquired because of the unique habitat fragments they support. Unfortunately, in a world dominated by human activity, most natural areas on the North Fork have been and continue to be modified to varying degrees by climate change effects, past and on-going land-use activities and the introduction of non-native plants and animals. Excessive deer herbivory is also a priority concern.

### A. Climate change effects

As climate variables are the key determinants of geographic distributions and biophysical characteristics of ecosystems, communities, and species, climate change is therefore affecting many species attributes, ecological interactions, and ecosystem processes. Reports show that global atmospheric temperatures have continued to maintain a strong warming trend since the 1970's, that the warming trend continues to climb, and that the longer-term warming trend is clear and unambiguous (Allison *et al.*, 2009). Climate change has become a recognized driver of ecosystem change.

Two general concepts provide the framework for thinking about and managing for resilience, which in turn will hopefully help our ecological communities best adapt to the effects of climate change. One is to support the species composing the structural foundation of the ecosystem (*e.g.*, organisms that create physical structures upon which other species depend), such as salt marsh grass in wetlands and trees in a forest (CCSP, 2008). Since ecosystems morph to and from several states (*e.g.*, grassland to forest and back again), the expectation is that a system should be managed to keep structural species in the system although perhaps not always dominant. The other concept is to ensure that ecosystems have all that they need in order to recover from disturbances (aka biodiversity) (CCSP, 2008). Biodiversity encompasses species diversity, genetic diversity and habitat heterogeneity. The concept of biodiversity invokes the precautionary principle, calling for insurance that ecosystems have all the biotic building blocks (functional groups, species, genes) that they need for recovery. These building blocks can also be thought of as ecological memory: the "network of species, their dynamic interactions between each other and the environment, and the combination of structures that make reorganization after disturbance possible" (Bengtsson *et al.*, 2003).

### B. Suppression or elimination of natural processes

Residential development, farming, the building of roads, effective fire suppression efforts, and other land-use activities oftentimes result in the suppression or elimination of natural processes such as sediment transport, food web dynamics, stream flow, soil moisture regimes, flooding, and natural fire regimes. With the detailed planning and stakeholder review embodied in site-specific detailed plans, it is within the Town's ability to help restore the functioning of select Town-owned parcels. For example, bulkheads can be removed to restore natural shoreline contours, culverts and old driveways can be removed to restore flow to a choked wetland, a road underpass can be installed to connect two protected habitats in a

migratory route and reduce vehicle mortality for species such as frogs and turtles, illegal dumpsites can be removed to reclaim habitat, and grasslands can be restored to ensure habitat heterogeneity in a system.

### C. Invasive and non-native plants and animals

The introduction of exotic and invasive plants and animals poses a clear threat to native species and the integrity of the natural communities we remember as children. Recently, some natural resource managers have been moving towards accepting non-native species, and the novel ecosystems they create as inevitable. Novel ecosystems are commonly thought of as new combinations of species that arise through human action, environmental change, and the impacts of introduced species from other parts of the world (Hobbs et al., 2006; Seastedt et al. 2008.).

While this line of thinking does not mean that resource managers should stop managing invasive species, the Town of Southold will only manage invasive species in two scenarios. The Town will manage invasive species as per a detailed, site-specific management plan when a known population of endangered, threatened, species of special concern, locally rare or unique native species or ecological community is directly jeopardized. In the detailed management plans, invasive species management projects will be ranked in priority by taking into account the native species' or community's rarity and likelihood of the project's success. Secondly, select early detection/rapid response (EDRR) species will be managed as per an EDRR plan. Early detection and rapid response (EDRR) efforts address invasive plants and animals while infestations are small; once populations become widely established, they become very difficult and expensive to control (*e.g.*, asian long-horned beetle). Action thresholds and management practices for managing EDRR species will be outlined in a Town-wide EDRR response plan and coordinated with the Long Island Invasive Species Management Area (LIISMA; see <http://nyis.info/liisma/default.aspx>). Eradicating invasive species commonly found throughout Long Island from a given landscape solely for the purpose of eradicating the invasive is not a priority for Town-owned lands and will not be undertaken.

### D. Excessive deer herbivory

The suburbanization of Southold continues to create more deer habitat rather than eliminate it, as deer prefer the "fringe" environment between woodland and open lawn. To compound the problem, numerous farms and residences have erected deer fencing, which displaces these deer herds to other parts of the Town. The current density of white-tailed deer in Southold is too high for the landscape to sustain. Without management, it is expected that the problem will only get worse.

Common signs of too many deer include browse lines (horizontal lines on trees, often 5-6 feet in height, below which vegetation has been removed by deer browsing) and a degraded vegetation understory (Tilghman 1989, Healy 1997). High-density herds (*i.e.*, >30 deer /mi<sup>2</sup>) have been associated with damage to habitats (*e.g.*, lack of forest regeneration, a species shift in plant composition since deer preferentially feed on native plants), economic impacts (*e.g.*, timber resources, ornamental plantings, agricultural damage, and vehicle collisions), and tickborne disease transmission (Woolf and Harder 1979, Cypher and Cypher 1988). Browsing by overabundant deer also adversely affects other wildlife by limiting food and cover provided by understory and other vegetation (McShea and Rappole 1997). For example, birds (*i.e.*, eastern wood pewee, indigo bunting, least flycatcher, yellow-billed cuckoo, cerulean warbler, eastern phoebe and American robin) that nest in shrubs or the immediate layers of forest, declined in habitat excessively browsed by deer in a 10-year study conducted by the US Forest Service (deCastela 1994).

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While a wide range of deer densities and carrying capacities has been reported in the literature, managing for ~20 deer per square mile is commonly recognized as needed in a given area for a healthy ecosystem to flourish. Some of the levels cited include 26-44 deer mi<sup>-2</sup> (10-17 km<sup>-2</sup>) (Healy 1997), 18 deer mi<sup>-2</sup> (7 km<sup>-2</sup>) (Tilghman 1989), and 5-16 deer mi<sup>-2</sup> (2-6 km<sup>-2</sup>) (Rooney 1995). It has been shown that when deer densities are reduced to approximately 20 per square mile, the restoration of forest vegetation will begin and plant/tree species diversity will increase, although it may take years to reverse the damage caused by high deer densities (*i.e.*, Horsley *et al.* 2003 showed that the diversity of forest vegetation began to return 10 years after deer densities were reduced). Deer populations are managed through the Town Of Southhold's Deer Management Committee.

### VI. Prohibited Activities

To emphasize that the Town is proceeding with a "hands off" approach (Section IV) and that public access is only allowed for limited activities (Section III), the following list further outlines uses prohibited on Town-owned open space lands covered by this management plan:

- (1) All activities not related to the purposes of the property acquisitions are prohibited.
- (2) Throwing, breaking, casting, laying or depositing any garbage, refuse, glass or any injurious substance of any kind or nature.
- (3) Use of motorized vehicles and equipment with the exceptions of vehicles and equipment necessary for approved stewardship work and emergency/public safety vehicles.
- (4) Willfully destroying, injuring, defacing, damaging, removing or displacing any town-owned property.
- (5) Events including, but not limited to, weddings, parties, reunions, flea markets, swap meets, antique shows, and car shows.
- (6) Maintaining a camp, trailer or other structure.
- (7) Conducting any business, solicitation or advertising.
- (8) Campfires or bonfires.
- (9) Possessing or discharging any fireworks.
- (10) The building, placing, or moving of any structures including, but not limited to windmills and cell towers.
- (11) The creation of any athletic fields including, but not limited to, basketball courts, volleyball courts, soccer fields, football fields and baseball fields.
- (12) Irrigation systems.
- (13) Sports activities, including league games.
- (14) Digging and artifact recovery.
- (15) Soil removal or excavation.
- (16) Woodcutting.
- (17) Removal of vegetation.
- (18) Hunting (note: Overarching plans to manage deer may include all or select open space parcels also covered by this plan. The Town of Southhold Deer Management Committee manages this program.).
- (19) Trapping of wildlife with the exception of Town-approved trapping of diseased wildlife and feral cats.
- (20) Abandonment of pets or other domesticated animals.

### VII. Literature Cited

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Appendix A. Properties managed under the Generic Management Plan

	SCTM#	Acreage	Location	Hamlet	Project name	Date Acquired	Acquisition Fund(s)	Owner
1	1000-6.-8-6	0.81	Central Ave	Fishers Island	Fitzgerald	2/24/99		Town
2	1000-9.-8-2.1	2.36	Reservoir Rd	Fishers Island	FITF, LLC (Dixon Harvey)	10/18/07	CPF	Town
3	1000-23.-1-20.1	0.48	Dam Pond	E. Marion	Lettieri/PLT	5/30/02	CPF	Town
4	1000-27.-5-5.2	1.88	Gidd's Bay	Orient	Tax Deed	1/16/85	none	Town
5	1000-27.-5-7.2	1.03	Narrow River Rd	Orient	Tax Deed	1/16/85	none	Town
6	1000-28.-1-1	3.94	Gidd's Bay	Orient	Tax Deed	4/8/85	none	Town
7	1000-40.-2-1	1.18	Inlet Pond	Greenport	H.J.S. Land & Development Corp	12/14/65		Town
8	1000-40.-2-16	2.21	Homestead Way	Greenport	H.J.S. Land & Development Corp			Town
9	1000-40.-5-1.40	3.93	Moore's Lane	Greenport	Caroll/Bracken			Town
10	1000-45.-5-3	15.03	Pipes Cove	Southold	Sill	2/16/11	CPF	Town
11	1000-45.-5-4	8.74	Pipes Cove	Southold	Sill	2/16/11	CPF	Town
12	1000-50.-6-5.7	1.87	Lighthouse Rd	Southold	Too Bee Realty	2/2/95	open space bond	Town
13	1000-50.-6-5.11	0.45	Lighthouse Rd	Southold	Too Bee Realty	2/23/93	none (gift)	Town
14	1000-53.-4-46	0.12	Bay Shore Rd	Greenport	Tax Deed		none	Town
15	1000-54.-2-5	0.38	Soundview Ave	Southold	Tax Deed	8/23/88	none	Town
16	1000-54.-6-20	22.30	Jennings Rd	Southold	Damianos	12/28/01	CPF	Town
17	1000-56.-1-2.15	2.79	Pond Ave	Southold	Tax Deed	1/11/02	none	Town
18	1000-56.-5-12.1	0.56	Budds Pond Rd	Southold	Palameri	2/7/06	CPF	Town
19	1000-57.-1-43	0.48	Albacore Dr	Greenport	J&C Holdings (Hurtado)	8/24/06	open space bond	Town
20	1000-58.-1-1.1	57.88	Sound View Ave	Peconic	Bittner	4/7/08	CPF/Federal/County	Town/County
21	1000-59.-4-5.9	1.49	Greenfield's Ln	Southold	Tax Deed	1/11/02	none	Town
22	1000-68.-2-3	0.22	Goldsmith's Inlet	Peconic	Bailey/Worth	year: 1926		Town
23	1000-69.-5-1	1.95	Akerly Pond Ln	Southold				Town
24	1000-74.-1-3	0.48	Henry's Lane	Peconic	Blackham	12/21/06	CPF	Town
25	1000-74.-1-44.11	0.52	Henry's Lane	Peconic	Tax Deed	1/11/02	none	Town

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Appendix A. Properties managed under the Generic Management Plan (continued)

	SCTM#	Acreage	Location	Hamlet	Project name	Date Acquired	Acquisition Fund(s)	Owner
26	1000-78.-7-18	0.13	Waterview Dr	Southold	Tax Deed	11/7/86	none	Town
27	1000-79.-7-41	3.10	Leeward Dr	Southold	Tax Deed	1/11/02	none	Town
28	1000-84.-1-6.18	3.46	Bridge Lane	Cutchogue	Tax Deed	1/11/02	none	Town
29	1000-86.-2-12.1	1.53	Wells Road	Peconic	George Wells	1/18/00	CPF	Town
30	1000-86.-6-33	0.38	South Harbor Rd	Southold	Wortis	12/17/91		Town
31	1000-87.-1-26.2	2.16	Minnehaha Blvd	Southold	Drum/Saland	1/12/05	CPF	Town
32	1000-87.-3-64	2.67	Moyle Cove	Southold	Laughing Waters Prop Owner Assoc	4/2/64		Town
33	1000-87.-6-12.1	45.44	Main Bayview Rd	Southold	Blocker	6/11/08	CPF/County	Town/County
34	1000-88.-6-13.54	11.60	Main Bayview Rd	Southold	Laoudis			Town
35	1000-95.-4-18.41	2.19	Gold Spur	Cutchogue	Tax Deed	1/11/02	none	Town
36	1000-96.-2-8	0.98	Route 48	Cutchogue	Wickham	12/16/86	none (gift)	Town
37	1000-98.-2-21	19.99	Little Creek	Peconic	Commoners	3/9/71		Town
38	1000-100.-3-10.16	0.73	Inlet View	Mattituck	Tax Deed	1/11/02	none	Town
39	1000-100.-3-15.14	1.08	Reeve Road	Mattituck	Tax Deed	1/11/02	none	Town
40	1000-102.-8-35	1.33	Crownland Ln	Cutchogue	Tax Deed	1/11/02	none	Town
41	1000-104.-3-17	0.57	Bay Ave	Cutchogue	EMC Mortgage Corporation	5/22/97		Town
42	1000-106.-1-7	0.89	Ruth Rd	Mattituck	Vreeland/Wills	6/3/04	open space bond	Town
43	1000-107.-2-3.15	0.56	Greton Court	Mattituck	Tax Deed	1/11/02	none	Town
44	1000-110.-7-27	0.29	East Road	Cutchogue				Town
45	1000-113.-4-1	0.80	Mattituck Creek	Mattituck	C&D Realty	6/28/06	CPF	Town
46	1000-113.-14-11	4.30	Cox Neck Rd	Mattituck	Tax Deed	1/11/02	none	Town
47	1000-115.-12-1	0.22	Deep Hole Creek	Mattituck	Dickerson Estate	12/10/08	CPF	Town
48	1000-116.-1-9.2	5.20	Down's Creek	Cutchogue	Zahler	12/28/99	none	Town



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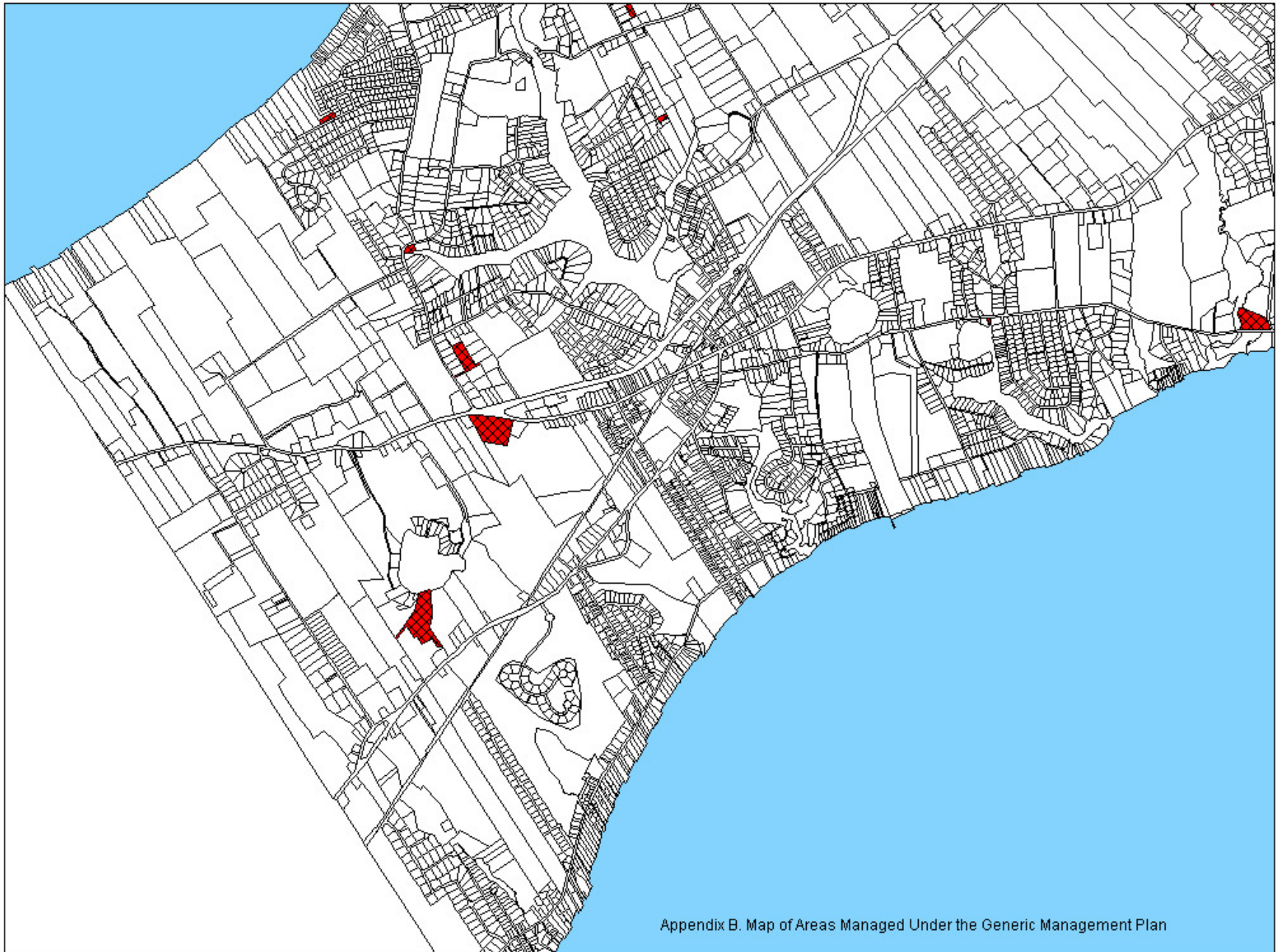
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Appendix A. Properties managed under the Generic Management Plan (continued)

	SCTM#	Acreage	Location	Hamlet	Project name	Date Acquired	Acquisition Fund(s)	Owner
49	1000-121.-5-4.4	10.00	Sound Ave	Mattituck	Adamowicz-Town	12/22/03	CPF	Town
50	1000-125.-1-6.3	10.80	Laurel Lake	Mattituck	Young	11/30/06	CPF	Town
51	1000-134.-4-13	0.87	Haywater Cove	Cutchogue	Commoners	7/30/97		Town
52	1000-134.-4-14	1.44	Haywater Cove	Cutchogue	Commoners	7/30/97		Town
53	1000-137.-1-27	0.19	Stillwater Ave	Cutchogue	Tax Deed	3/6/86	none	Town
54	1000-137.-6-1	1.90	East Creek	Cutchogue	Commoners	7/30/97		Town
55	1000-137.-7-1	0.30	East Creek	Cutchogue	Commoners	7/30/97		Town

CPF = Community Preservation Fund (2% Real Estate Transfer Tax)

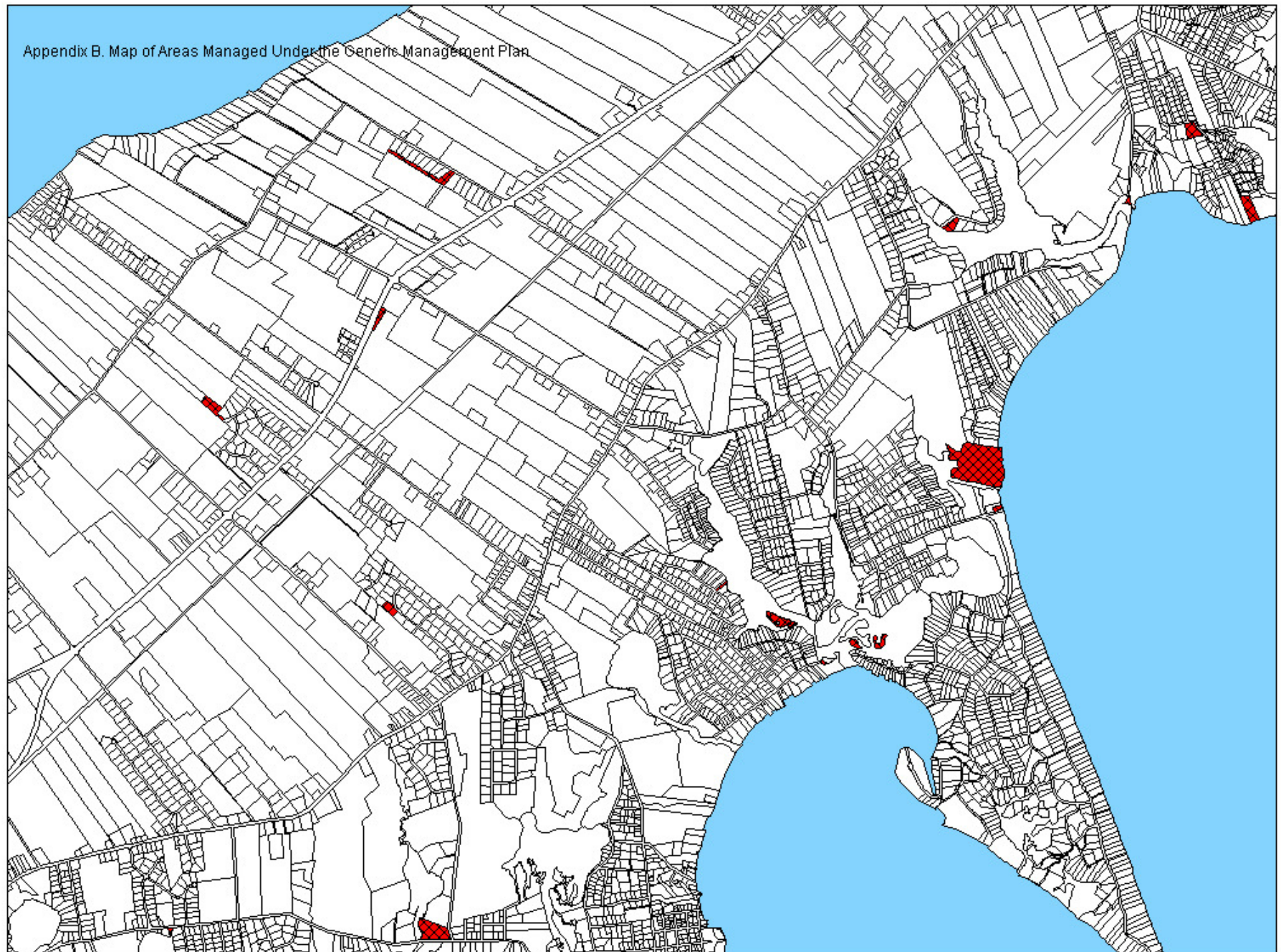
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Appendix B. Map of Areas Managed Under the Generic Management Plan

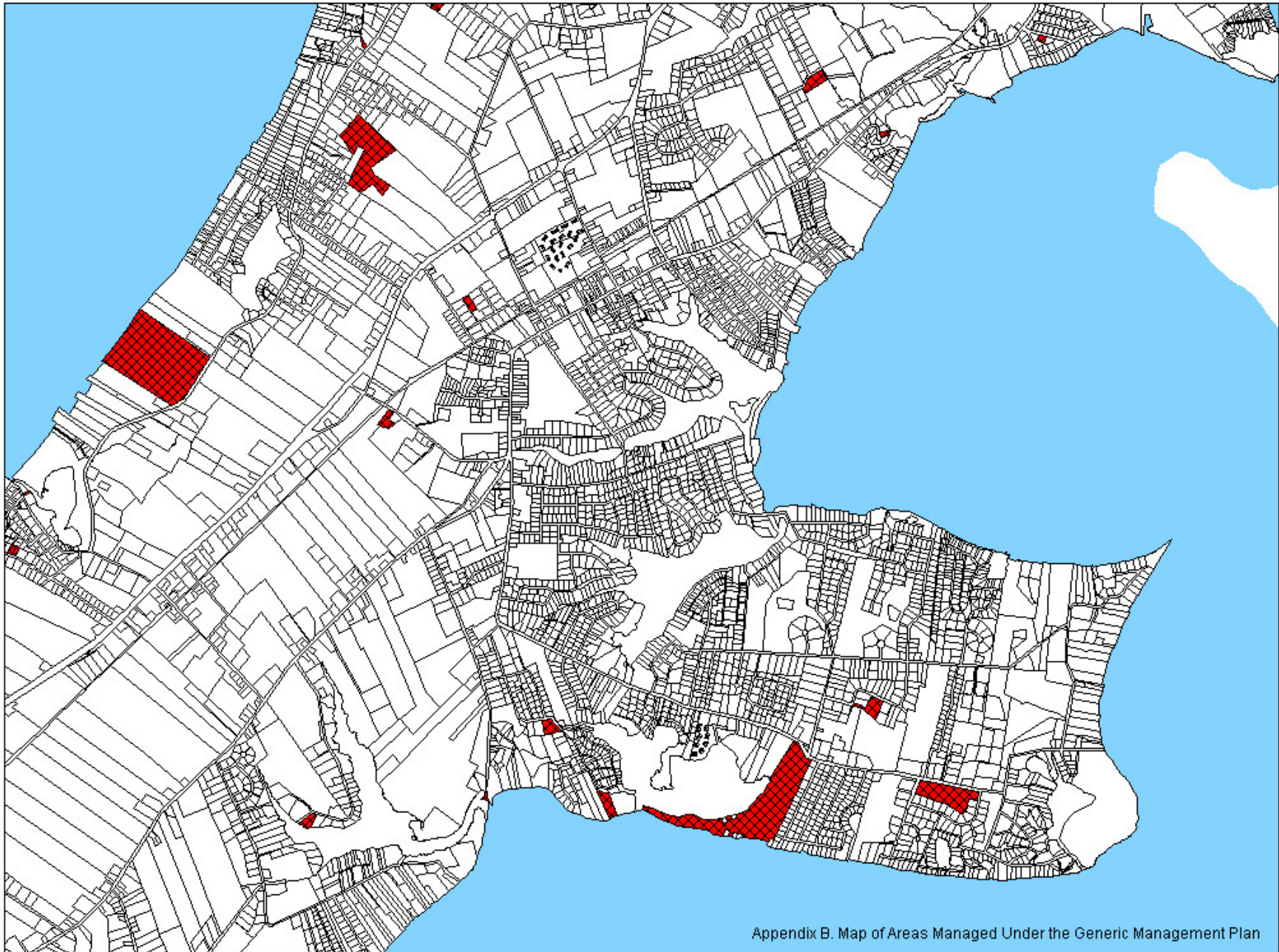


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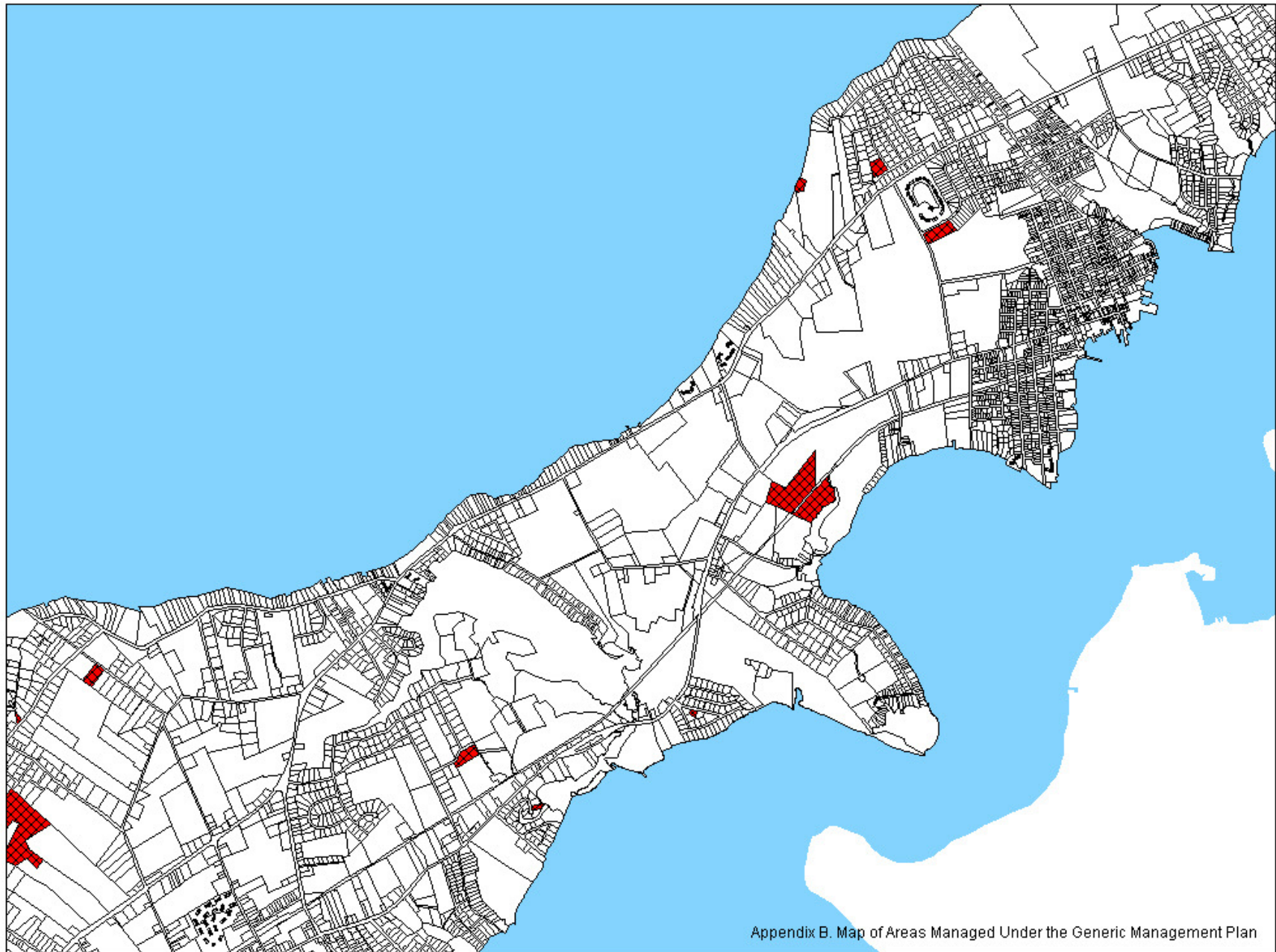




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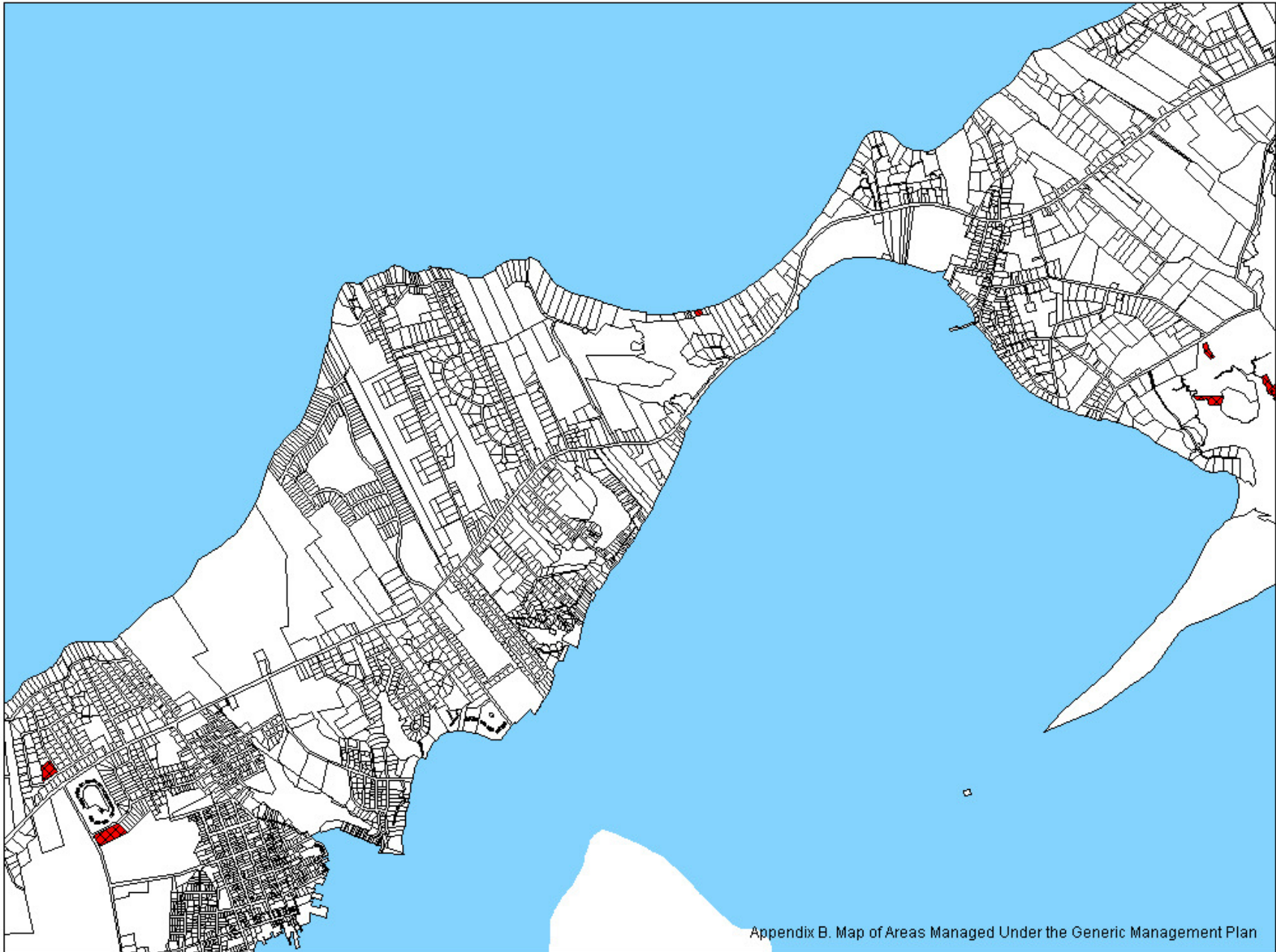
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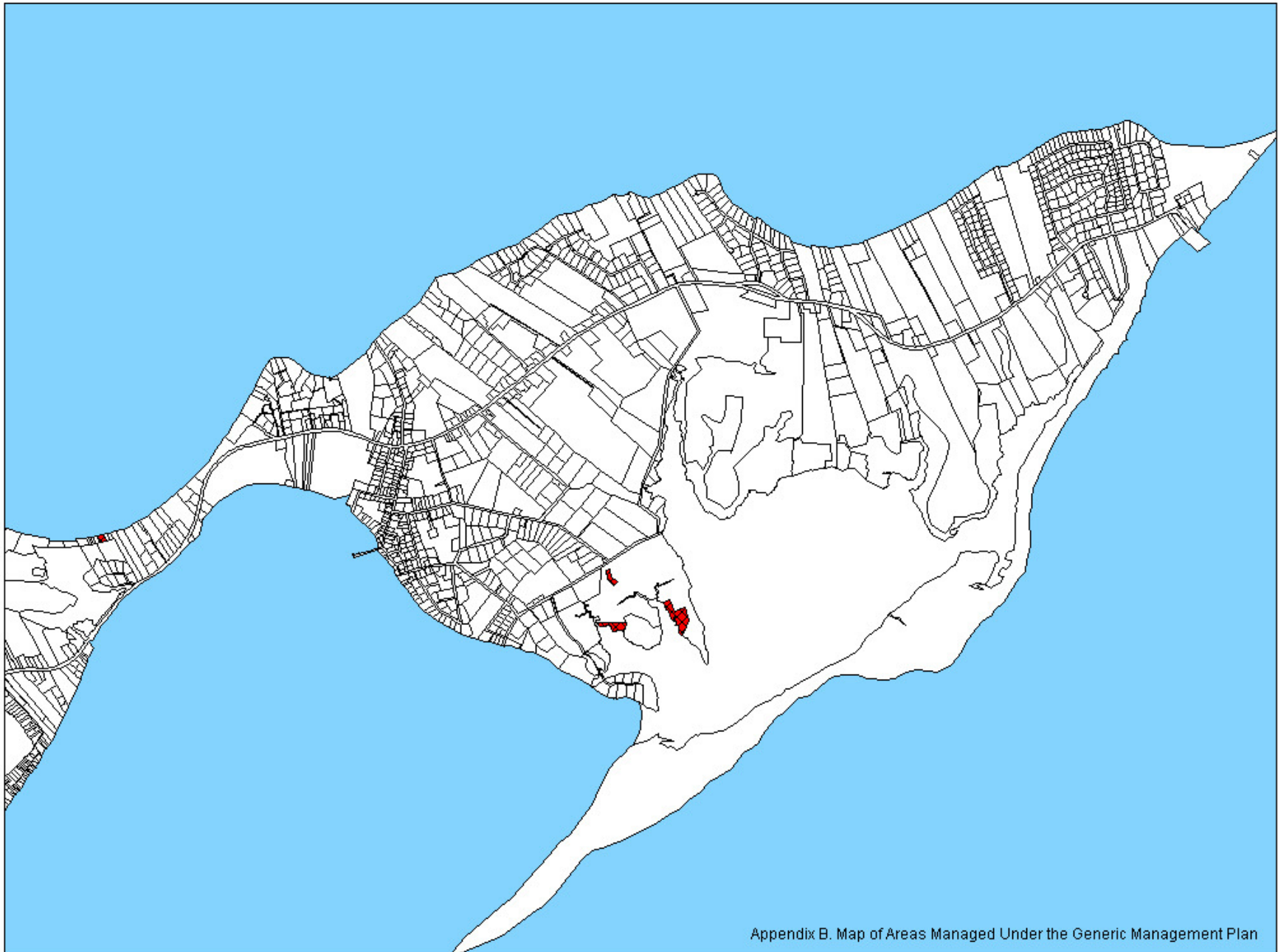


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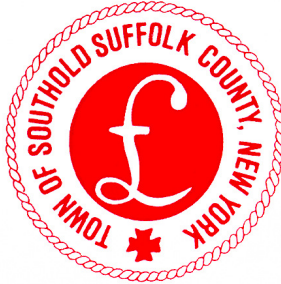
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Appendix B. Map of Areas Managed Under the Generic Management Plan

Appendix C. Public access permit application for groups less than 50 persons in attendance

**Melissa A. Spiro**  
**Land Preservation Coordinator**  
**Town of Southold**



**Southold Town Annex**  
**54375 State Route 25**  
**PO Box 1179**  
**Southold, NY 11971-0959**

**Public Access Permit Application**  
**for parcels managed under the generic stewardship management plan**  
**with groups less than 50 persons in attendance**

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Requesting Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Open Space Parcel Desired: \_\_\_\_\_

Day(s), Date(s), and Time(s) of Use: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Use: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is admission being charged? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, how much is being charged? \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide a detailed explanation of how the proceeds are to be used: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



**Public Access Permit Application**  
**for parcels managed under the generic stewardship management plan**  
**with groups less than 50 persons in attendance**  
(continued)

**Hold Harmless Agreement**

The applicant/group/organization agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Town of Southold, its officials, employees, and/or agents from all claims, lawsuits, hospital and/or doctor bills, actions, proceedings, and liabilities for the loss or damage to property, or any injury, the death of a person, including any expenses incurred by the Town of Southold defending any claims, lawsuits, or action that may arise as a result of the conduct, actions, including the negligence of the applicant/group/organization to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law.

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ (please print)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/Authorized Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ (please print)

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_